10/018408
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Docket No.: **F-7249**
Filing Date: **December 13, 2001**

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[ ] ATTN: BOX PATENT APPLICATION

[ ] ATTN: BOX DESIGN PATENT APPLICATION

[x] ATTN: BOX PCT

[ ] ATTN: BOX PROVISIONAL PATENT APPLICATION

[x] THIS IS THE 35 U.S.C 371 NATIONAL STAGE OF **PCT/JP00/03854** FILED

June 14, 2000

Sir:

Transmitted herewith for filing is the [x] Utility [ ] Design [x] nonprovisional [ ] provisional patent application of:

Inventor / Application Identifier: **So TAKEYAMA, et al.**

[ ] See Inventor Information Sheet attached

For: **GAME SYSTEM, CONTROL METHOD OF GAME, AND STORING MEDIUM READABLE BY COMPUTER**

[ ] This is a new patent application.
[x] This is the 35 U.S.C. 371 National Stage Application of the above-identified PCT Application.
[ ] This is a provisional patent application.
[ ] This is a: [ ] Continuation Application
[ ] Divisional Application
[ ] Continuation-in-Part Application
of prior Application Serial No. _.

[ ] Cancel in this application original claims ___ of the prior application before calculating the filing fee.

[ ] Amend the specification by inserting before the first line the sentence:
-- This is a [ ] Continuation, [ ] Divisional, [ ] Continuation-in-part, of Application

[ ] Incorporation By Reference. The entire disclosure of the prior application, from which a copy of the oath or declaration is supplied, is considered as being part of the disclosure of the accompanying application and is hereby incorporated by reference therein.

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ENCLOSED ARE THE FOLLOWING:		
X	12	Sheets of drawings ([X] formal [ ] informal size A4).
X	35	Pages of specification including abstract and claims.
X	47	Total pages.
X	Combined Declaration and Power of Attorney	
	X	Newly executed
		Copy from prior application
		Inventors deleted; see attached statement
	Sequence Listing	
		Computer Readable Copy
		Paper copy
		Statement verifying identity of above copies
X	Return Receipt Postcard	
X	Preliminary Amendment	
X	Assignment to: Konami Corporation	
		Assignment is of record in prior application Serial No._.
	X	Assignment Recordation Form Cover Sheet.
	X	Charge $40.00 to Deposit Account No. 10-1250 for recording Assignment.
	Information Disclosure Statement	
	Information Disclosure Citation	
	English translation	
X	Application Data Sheet	

PTO-1390 (Rev 10-98) TRANSMITTAL LETTER TO THE UNITED STATES DESIGNATED/ELECTED OFFICE (DO/EO/US)

PRIORITY CLAIMS		
	Applicant hereby claims the benefit of the filing date of the following provisional application(s) under the provision of 35 USC 119.	
X	Applicant hereby claims the benefit under the provisions of 35 USC 119 of the filing dates of the following applications as indicated below: **Japan Patent Appln. No. 11-167332, filed June 14, 1999, Priority Claimed** of which certified copies thereof	
		will follow
		are enclosed
	X	have been filed in the International Bureau
		were filed in prior application:

CLAIMS FILED AND FILING FEE CALCULATION					
ITEM	—			Rate	Applied Fee
[ ] Base Fee - Non PCT	—			$740	
[ ] Base Fee - PCT IPEA-US	—			$710	
[ ] Base Fee - PCT ISA-US	—			$740	
[ ] Base Fee - PCT not ISA or IPEA	—			$1,040	
[X] Base Fee - PCT with EPO or JPO Search Report	—			$890	$890
[ ] Base Fee - Design	—			$330	
[ ] Base Fee - Provisional	—			$160	
Claim Fees	Number Filed	Base Number	Number Extra over Base	—	
Total Claims	13	20	0	$18	$0
Independent Claims	3	3	0	$84	$0
Multiple Dependent Claim Fee	—			$280	$0
[ ] Small Entity Status is Asserted	—				($0)
[ ] Foreign Language Filing Fee	—			$130	$0
TOTAL FILING FEE					**$890**

PCT/JP 00/03937

[X] Please charge Deposit Account No. 10-1250 in the amount of the above TOTAL FILING FEE. A duplicate copy of this sheet is attached.

[X] Please charge to Deposit Account No. 10-1250 any further fees due for filing or during prosecution of this application under: 37 CFR 1.16; 37 CFR 1.17; and 37 CFR 1.492.

[X] Amendment of International Application PCT/JP00/03854 (22 pages).

[X] When all the requirements for a national stage application have been completed, applicant is notified (Form PT/DO/EO/903) of the acceptance of the application under 35 U.S.C. 371, including an itemized list of the items received. The itemized list includes an indication of whether a copy of the international search report and copies of the references cited therein are present in the national stage file. The examiner will consider the documents cited in the international search report, without any further action by the applicant under 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98, when both the international search report and copies of the documents are indicated to be present in the national stage file. The examiner will note the consideration in the first Office action. There is no requirement that the examiners list the documents on a PTO-892 form. See Form Paragraphs 6.53, 6.54, and 6.55 (reproduced in MPEP § 609.

JORDAN AND HAMBURG LLP

By _____
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Reg. No. 20,456
Attorney for Applicants

FOC2 FC1 8408 01-12-01

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Application Data Sheet

Application Information

Application Type::	Regular
Subject Matter::	Utility
Suggested Group Art Unit::	
Sequence submission?::	
Computer Readable Form (CRF)?::	
Title::	GAME SYSTEM, CONTROL METHOD OF GAME, AND STORING MEDIUM READABLE BY COMPUTER
Attorney Docket Number::	F-7249
Suggested Drawing Figure::	1
Total Drawing Sheets::	12
Small Entity::	No

PTO/SB/14 (08-00)
Approved for use through 10/31/2002. OMB 0651-0032
Patent and Trademark Office: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Applicant Information

Applicant Authority Type::	Inventor
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Correspondence Information

Correspondence Customer Number:: 000028107

Representative Information

Representative Designation::	Registration number::	Name::
Primary	20,456	Frank J. Jordan

Domestic Priority Information

Application::	Continuity Type::	Parent Application::	Parent Filing Date::
This application	National Stage of	PCT/JP00/03854	6/14/00

Foreign Priority Information

Country::	Application Number::	Filing Date::	Priority Claimed::
Japan	11-167332	06/14/99	Yes

Assignee Information

Assignee Name:: Konami Corporation

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Country of Mailing Address:: Japan

Postal or Zip Code of Mailing Address::

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F-7249

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant	:	So TAKEYAMA et al.
Serial No.	:	(U.S. National Stage of PCT/JP00/03854 Filed June 14, 2000)
Filed	:	(Concurrently herewith)
For	:	GAME SYSTEM, CONTROL METHOD OF GAME, AND STORING MEDIUM READABLE BY COMPUTER
Group Art Unit	:	(Not yet known)
Examiner	:	(Not yet known)

Assistant Commissioner
for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT (A)

Sir:

Preliminary to examination, please amend the above-identified patent application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as shown re-written below with amendments effected therein. Appendix I is attached hereto having marked versions of said claims with amendments indicated by brackets and underlining.

5. (Amended) The game system according to Claim 2, wherein

the line is set in one direction of a vertical direction and a horizontal direction of the matrix, and the dividend controlling device produces the dividend or changes the dividend having been produced when a predetermined combination is formed by the cards on the predetermined number of the effective lines, at least in the diagonal direction or in a direction crossing with the above line at right angle in the matrix.

6. (Amended) The game system according to Claim 2, wherein

the predetermined number corresponds to a maximum number of the lines included in the matrix.

9. (Amended) The game system according to Claim 1, further comprising:

a selecting device for selecting reception of a dividend or a chance of increasing a dividend when the dividend controlling device produces the dividend, according to a player's instruction given by the input unit; and

a dividend increase controlling device for increasing the dividend if an outcome of the game satisfies a predetermined condition, while performing a predetermined game, when the above chance is selected.

REMARKS

This Preliminary Amendment is being filed concurrently with the filing of this National Stage application. It is respectfully requested that the first Office Action be directed to the application as amended herein.

Respectfully submitted,

Jordan and Hamburg LLP

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FJJ/cj
Enc. Appendix I (Amended Claims with Amendments Indicated Therein by Brackets and Underlining)

APPENDIX I

AMENDED CLAIMS WITH AMENDMENTS INDICATED THEREIN
BY BRACKETS AND UNDERLINING

5. (Amended) The game system according to [any one of Claims 2 to 4] Claim 2, wherein

the line is set in one direction of a vertical direction and a horizontal direction of the matrix, and the dividend controlling device produces the dividend or changes the dividend having been produced when a predetermined combination is formed by the cards on the predetermined number of the effective lines, at least in the diagonal direction or in a direction crossing with the above line at right angle in the matrix.

6. (Amended) The game system according to [any one of Claims 2 to 4] Claim 2, wherein

the predetermined number corresponds to a maximum number of the lines included in the matrix.

9. (Amended) The game system according to [any one of Claims 1 to 8] Claim 1, further comprising:

a selecting device for selecting reception of a dividend or a chance of increasing a dividend when the dividend controlling device produces the dividend, according to a player's instruction given by the input unit; and

a dividend increase controlling device for increasing the dividend if an outcome of the game satisfies a predetermined condition, while performing a predetermined game, when the above chance is selected.

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SPECIFICATION

GEME SYSTEM, CONTROL METHOD OF GAME, AND STORING MEDIUM READABLE BY COMPUTER

Technical Field

The present invention relates to a game system for performing a card game such as poker and the like on a video screen.

Background Art

There is known a kind of an arcade game machine for performing a poker game on a video screen. In this kind of the game machine, a predetermined number of cards (typically, five cards) are distributed to a player on a screen and if a combination set as a successful hand is included in the above cards, a player wins and a predetermined dividend is given to the player.

The above-mentioned game machine is advantageous for a player to understand the content of a game easily because of performing the game truly according to a rule of the poker game of the trump. On the contrary, the probability of completing a successful hand is restricted by the rule of the game and accordingly, a player feels monotonous because of the short of surprise and accidental performance.

Disclosure of the Invention

An object of the present invention is to provide a game system, a game control method, and a storing medium suitable for them in much consideration of surprise and accidental performance without impairing easiness of a game.

In order to achieve the above object, a game system according to the present invention comprises: a display unit which can display a game screen; an input unit for supplying a signal corresponding to a player's operation; and a game controller for executing a predetermined card game on a screen of the display unit with reference to the signal supplied from the input unit, and the game controller includes: a card deciding device for deciding a plurality of cards displayed on the game screen in a matrix shape, a betting device for setting the number of lines depending on the value of a play, which a player sets by operating the input device, of a plurality of lines formed by the cards arranged in a predetermined direction on the game screen, as an effective line, and a dividend controlling device for controlling a dividend for a player respectively according to a combination of the cards on the effective line and a combination of the cards in a direction different from the direction of the above line.

Thus, the present invention employs a rule of producing a dividend when a successful hand of a well-known card game such as poker is completed on the effective lines, thereby keeping familiarity and easiness for the game, similarly to the conventional card game machine. When a combination of the cards in a direction different from the line satisfies a predetermined condition, an operation for changing (producing, increasing, or decreasing) a dividend is performed, thereby enhancing a player's fun of the game by adding surprise and accidental performance to the well-known card game.

In the game system according to the present invention, the betting device can increase the number of the effective lines according as the play value increases, and the dividend controlling device can produce the dividend or changes the dividend having been produced, when a predetermined number, two or more of the effective lines is selected and a predetermined combination is formed by the cards on the predetermined number of the effective lines in a direction different from the direction of the above line.

Therefore, the number of the effective lines is increased as a player increases the value of the play. When the number of the effective lines reaches the predetermined number, the dividend controlling device controls a dividend according to a combination of the cards in a direction

different from that of the line. Accordingly, a player can select how to play a game; in pursuit of a combination of the cards only on the effective lines or in pursuit of a combination of the cards also in a direction different from the line as well as the above combination, according to the value of the play.

In the game system according to the present invention, the dividend controlling device can produce the dividend when the cards on at least one effective line of the predetermined number of the effective lines form a combination set as a successful hand, or when the cards on the predetermined number of the effective lines form a predetermined combination in a direction different from the direction of the above line.

Therefore, even if a successful hand is not formed on the effective line, a dividend may be produced by forming a predetermined combination in a direction different from the line. Accordingly, the present invention can enhance surprise and accidental performance for a dividend.

In the game system according to the present invention, the dividend controlling device can produce the dividend for the successful hand when a combination set as a successful hand is completed by the cards at least on one effective line of the predetermined number of the effective lines, and changes the dividend for the successful hand when a

predetermined combination is completed by the cards on the predetermined number of the effective lines in a direction different from the direction of the above line.

In this case, if a dividend is produced by forming a successful hand on the effective lines, the dividend is changed by a combination of the cards in a direction different from the line. Therefore, the present invention can create a situation in which a dividend is further increased or the dividend once obtained is decreased, thereby enhancing the fun of the game.

In the game system according to the present invention, the line may be set in one direction of a vertical direction and a horizontal direction of the matrix, and the dividend controlling device can produce the dividend or change the dividend having been produced when a predetermined combination is formed by the cards on the predetermined number of the effective lines, at least in the diagonal direction or in a direction crossing with the above line at right angle in the matrix.

Therefore, the dividend is controlled depending on a combination of the cards placed in a vertical, a horizontal, or a diagonal direction of the matrix. Accordingly, it is possible to give the card game surprise and accidental performance which cannot be obtained in a game of

controlling a dividend only depending on a combination of the cards placed in one direction.

In the game system according to the present invention, the predetermined number may correspond to the maximum number of the lines included in the matrix. In this case, unless the player sets the value of the play so as to make all lines be selected as the effective lines in one time of the game, a combination of the cards in a direction different from the line is not evaluated, and the nature of the greatest hit is given to that combination, thereby attracting the player's interest.

In the game system according to the present invention, trump cards may be used as the above-mentioned plurality of the cards, and the dividend controlling device may produce the dividend when a successful hand is formed on the effective lines in a card game using the trump cards.

In this case, the card game familiar to a lot of players, like poker, is performed on the effective lines, thereby keeping easiness for the game.

In the game system according to the present invention, the dividend controlling device may produce the dividend or change the dividend having been produced when a predetermined number of the cards of the same mark or the cards of the same number is placed in a direction different from the direction of the above line.

Therefore, some combination of the cards different from the combination of the well-known card game like a poker game can be determined as a successful hand associated with a dividend, thereby adding more surprise and accidental performance to the game.

The game system according to the present invention may further comprise a selecting device for selecting reception of a dividend or a chance of increasing a dividend when the dividend controlling device produces the dividend, according to a player's instruction given by the input unit; and a dividend increase controlling device for increasing the dividend if an outcome of the game satisfies a predetermined condition, while performing a predetermined game, when the above chance is selected.

According to the above structure, when some dividend is produced in a game using the cards arranged in a matrix shape, a chance of further increasing the dividend is given to a player, thereby enhancing the player's fun for the game.

The game system according to the present invention may further comprise a discriminating device for checking whether or not to advance the count associated with a chance of increasing the dividend based on the outcome of the game, every time a game using a plurality of the cards placed in the matrix shape is performed; and a probability controlling device for increasing a probability of achieving the outcome

satisfying the predetermined condition in a game performed by the dividend increase controlling device, when the dividend controlling device produces the dividend as the above count reaches a predetermined value.

According to the above structure, the count is advanced according as a game using the cards arranged in a matrix shape is repeated, and after the count reaches the predetermined value, it becomes easier to take a chance of increasing the dividend, thereby keeping the player's fun for the game for a longer time.

In the game system according to the present invention, the dividend increase controlling device may make a player select a predetermined number of the cards from the plurality of the cards, in the game, and may execute a game for deciding victory or defeat according as whether the selected cards satisfy a predetermined condition or not, and the probability controlling device may increase the probability by increasing the number of the cards selectable by the player.

Thus, a player can recognize a change of the probability clearly, according to an increase in the number of the selectable cards.

A game controlling method according to the present invention is to execute the following procedures by a computer provided in a game system: a procedure of deciding

a plurality of cards displayed on a game screen in a matrix shape, a procedure of setting the number of lines depending on the value of a play a player sets, of a plurality of lines formed by the cards arranged in a predetermined direction on the game screen, as an effective line, and a procedure of controlling a dividend for a player respectively according to a combination of the cards on the effective line and a combination of the cards in a direction different from the direction of the above line.

A storing medium readable by a computer according to the present invention is to store a program for working the computer provided in a game system as a card deciding device for deciding a plurality of cards displayed on a game screen in a matrix shape, a betting device for setting the number of lines depending on the value of a play a player sets, of a plurality of lines formed by the cards arranged in a predetermined direction on the game screen, as an effective line, and a dividend controlling device for controlling a dividend for a player respectively according to a combination of the cards on the effective line and a combination of the cards in a direction different from the direction of the above line.

According to the method or the storing medium, the game system of the present invention can be formed at ease.

Brief Description of the Drawings:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view showing the appearance of an arcade game machine related to an embodiment of the present invention.

Fig. 2 is a view showing the details of a control panel fixed on the arcade game machine in Fig. 1.

Fig. 3 is a block diagram illustrating a constitution of a control system provided in the arcade game machine of Fig. 1.

Fig. 4 is a flow chart showing the procedure of the game processing executed by the CPU of Fig. 3.

Fig. 5 is a flow chart continued from the Fig. 4.

Fig. 6 is a flow chart showing the procedure of the double-up game processing executed as a sub-routine of Fig. 5.

Fig. 7 is a flow chart showing the procedure of super double-up game processing executed as a sub-routine of Fig. 5.

Fig. 8 is a view showing a screen of a poker game displayed on the monitor in the game processing of Fig. 4.

Fig. 9 is a view showing the state in which the cards in the bottom line are turned over from the state shown in Fig. 8.

Fig. 10 is a view showing the state in which the cards in all lines are turned over from the state shown in Fig. 8.

Fig. 11 is a view showing the screen of the double-up game displayed on the monitor in the processing of the double-up game of Fig. 6.

Fig. 12 is a view showing the state in which both a card of a dealer and a card chosen by a player are turned over from the state shown in Fig. 11.

Best Mode for carrying out the invention.

Fig. 1 shows the appearance of a game system to which the present invention is applied. This game system is constituted as an arcade game machine 1 installed in game centers, etc. The game system comprises a base 2, a housing 3 placed on the base 2, and a monitor 4 as a display unit installed in the upper portion of the housing 3. The monitor 4 is composed of a CRT with its longitudinal direction fixed in the vertical direction. A control panel 5 is provided in the lower front portion of the housing 3. The control panel 5 has an input unit 6 and a medal slot 7. As shown in Fig. 2, the input unit 6 is provided with a plurality of operation buttons 6a through 6f which function as push button switches. The number of the buttons and their positions can be decided freely. In the example shown in Fig. 2, a deal/draw/double button 6a, a max bet button 6b, a one-bed button 6c, a half double button 6d, a collect/pay out button 6e, and hold buttons 6f…6f are prepared.

Fig. 3 shows a constitution of a control system installed in the game machine 1. The game machine 1 has a CPU 10 for performing various calculations and operation controls necessary for advancing a game. The CPU 10 is electrically connected through a bus 21 with an image processor 11 for drawing a desired image on the monitor 4 according to the instruction of the CPU 10, a sound processor 13 for supplying a desired sound through a speaker unit 12 according to the instruction of the CPU 10, an illumination controller 15 for controlling the flash of illuminations 14 of the game machine 1 according to the instruction of the CPU 10, a RAM 16, a ROM 17, and an external storage 18 as storing device, a medal confirming unit 19 for discriminating the validity of medals which are put in from the medal slot 7 of the housing 3 (referred to Fig. 1), and a medal hopper 20 for storing the valid medals and paying out the number of medals according to the instruction of the CPU 10. A program and data necessary to control the basic operation at the activation of the game machine 1 are written in the ROM 17. The external storage 18 has a magnetic, an optical or a photo-electro-magnetic storing medium. A program and data necessary to execute a predetermined card game on the screen of the monitor 4 are stored in the storage medium. Alternatively, the external

storage 18 may be omitted, and a game program and data may be recorded in the ROM 17.

The CPU 10 is also connected with each operation buttons 6a to 6f of the input unit 6 through the bus 21. The CPU 10 is further connected with a communication unit 22 through the bus 21. Input/output interfaces are installed in the connected portion of the bus 21 and the above-mentioned respective units, depending on necessity. They are not illustrated here.

The communication unit 22 is installed between the game machine 1 and a progressive unit, not illustrated, in order to exchange information there between to control pay out and storage of a progressive bonus. Namely, a plurality of game machines including the game machine 1 are connected with the progressive unit. The respective game machines inform the progressive unit of the number of the bet medals. The progressive unit stores a certain ratio on the number of the informed medals as a progressive bonus and informs the respective game machines of the number of the stored medals. When the terms of payment for the progressive bonus are satisfied in some game machine, the progressive unit gives an instruction to pay out the progressive bonus to the game machine. The game machine which received the instruction pays out the number of the medals permitted as the progressive bonus.

The CPU 10 of the game machine 1 can optionally execute several kinds of card games according to a game program stored in the external storage 18 (or the ROM 17). Figs. 4 to 7 are flow charts respectively showing the procedure of the CPU 10 when one of the card games is selected. Figs. 8 to 12 respectively show a screen example displayed on the monitor 4 in the card game. The basic procedure of the card game done here is as follows.

First, when the game starts, a poker game screen 100A as shown in Fig. 8 is displayed on the monitor 4. On the poker game screen 100A, 25 pieces of cards 101...101 are turned face down and arranged in a matrix pattern of five cards square. One bet line consists of five cards lying horizontally. The screen includes five lines in total. When a player bets one medal, the bottom line is set as an effective line. Every time one medal is added, the effective line is increased one by one upwardly. When the number of the bets reaches five, all of the lines are set as the effective lines. The state where the number of the bets is five is called "max bet".

When the betting is completed, the cards 101 in the effective lines are turned face up (refer to Figs. 9 and 10). When two pairs or a special combination of much more points than the pairs is gained in the poker games in any effective line, a player wins. The number of the medals depending on

the successful hand is set up as a dividend. The player is given a right to proceed to the double-up game. Although there is also a case where a player can proceed to a super double-up game instead of the double-up game, it will be described later. If a player wants to receive the dividend, the dividend is divided, without executing the double-up game. When a player desires the double-up game, a double-up game screen 100B shown in Fig. 11 appears to start the double-up game. In the double-up game, one card 102 is delivered to a dealer, and three cards 103 ··· 103 are delivered to a player. When the player selects one of the three cards 103, the selected card 103 and the dealer's card 102 are turned face up (Fig. 12). If the card 103 selected by the player is larger than the dealer's card 102, the player wins. At this point, the predetermined number of the medals to be shared is doubled. When the player loses the double-up game, the dividend is confiscated. The double-up game can be executed repeatedly. When a player loses or wants to receive the dividend, the double-up game is ended, and the player returns to the poker game using 25 pieces of cards.

Various ideas for enhancing the fun of the game are devised other than the above procedure, and they are described with reference to the flow charts of Figs. 4 to 7.

When a predetermined game starting operation is

performed on the game machine 1, the CPU 10 starts the game processing of Fig. 4. Every time the medal confirming unit 19 supplies a signal indicating that a valid medal has been put in there, the CPU 10 adds one to the number of a credit stored in the RAM 16 (the number of the medals held by a player).

In the game processing of Fig. 4, 25 pieces of the cards 101 to be displayed on the monitor 4 are selected. Simultaneously, their positions are decided by the CPU 10 (Step S1). The poker game uses a total of 53 cards including one joker and the four suits; hearts, diamonds, clubs, and spades respectively consisting of 13 cards. In Step S1, 25 cards are selected therefrom. When a game is executed in a probability fluctuation mode described later, the number of the joker cards is changed to two and 25 cards are selected from a total of 54 cards. In any case, a random number is used for selection and arrangement of the cards. A probability of selecting each card is evenly set in the four suits. The joker is treated as a wild card that can be used as any of the four suits. Accordingly, a probability of completing a successful hand is increased in the probability fluctuation mode.

In the following Step S2, the selected 25 cards are displayed on the screen of the monitor 4. Whether or not a player performs a predetermined bet operation (push

operation of the one bet button 6c or the max bet button 6b) in the input unit 6 is discriminated (Step S3). When there is the bet operation, whether it is in a state of the max bet or not is discriminated with reference to the number of the bets recorded in the RAM 16 (Step S4). When it is not in the state of the max bet, whether the number of the medals in accordance with the number of the bets has been credited or not is discriminated with reference to the credit number recorded in the RAM 16 (Step S5).

When the credit number is satisfied, the effective line is increased by the number corresponding to the number of the added bets. Simultaneously, the number of the added bets is subtracted from the credit number (Step S6). The display about the number of the bets, the number of the effective lines, and the credit number on the poker game screen 100A is updated to the latest information recorded in the RAM 16 (Step S7).

Whether or not a player has performed an operation for opening the card (push operation of the button 6a) in the input unit 6 is checked (Step S8). When it proves that there is no such operation, this step will be returned to Step S3. When it is judged to be in the max bet state in Step S4, or when it is judged that the credit number is short in Step S5, Step S6 and Step S7 are omitted and the processing is advanced to Step S8.

When it is judged that the card open has been requested in Step S8, the state of facing up the cards 101 on the effective line, of the cards 101 displayed on the game screen 100A, is represented on the monitor 4 (Step S9). Fig. 9 shows the case where the effective line is one, and Fig. 10 shows the case where the effective line is five. In Fig. 10, a bingo described later is completed in the vertical line at the second from the right, and the character "BINGO" indicating the above to a player is overlapped on the cards.

In the following Step S10, the game achievement is judged, according to the content and collocation of the selected cards in Step S1 and the number of the effective lines stored in the RAM 16, and the judged result is displayed on the monitor 4. In Step S10, at least the following matters are discriminated;

(1) whether or not one successful hand and more is established on each effective line,

(2) whether or not the bingo is completed in the five cards lying in a vertical and a diagonal direction (where, it is limited to the cards on the effective lines),

(3) whether or not a mark associated with a progressive bonus is attached to each card on the effective line.

As for the above (1), the type of a successful hand and the odds for each successful hand are decided according to the actual rule of the poker. The bingo of (2) is

established for the purpose of producing a possibility of a dividend there, in addition to the combination of the cards on the effective lines. For example, such a state that the five cards of the same number or the same suit (mark) are lying in the vertical direction or the diagonal direction is set as the bingo. In the state other than the max bet, since the cards on one line and more are turned face down, the bingo is never completed in the case other than the max bet. The above (3) is established in order to pay out a progressive bonus.

As apparent from Figs. 8 to 12, a bonus information display window 120 for displaying the information on a progressive bonus is provided in the upper end portion of the game screens 100A and 100B, where three lines of gauges 121a to 121c and counters 122a to 122c corresponding to the respective gauges 121a to 121c are provided. The progressive game system including the game machine 1 controls the pay of the progressive bonus in three stages depending on the winning probability. The gauge 121a and the counter 122a in the uppermost of the bonus information display window 120 correspond to the highest ranking hand with the lowest winning probability. The gauge 121c and the counter 122c in the lowest portion correspond to the lower ranking hand with the highest winning probability. The gauge 121b and the counter 122b in the middle portion

correspond to the medium ranking hand with the medium winning probability. The amount of the progressive bonus (the number of the medals) in the case of the current highest ranking hand, medium ranking hand, lower ranking hand notified from the progressive unit is respectively displayed on the counters 122a to 122c.

The respective gauges 121a to 121c are classified by color, for example, into red, yellow, and blue. Inside the gauges, characters 123a to 123c are displayed to show the remaining pieces to the finals. The initial position of the respective characters 123a to 123c is set at the left end portion of the respective gauges 121a to 121c. When the cards are selected in Step S1, the CPU 10 shares the symbol marks respectively represented in the same color as each color of the respective gauges 121a to 121c on some of the 25 cards at a predetermined probability. The probability at this time is in proportion to the winning probability. In Step S10, whether the symbol marks are disposed on the effective line or not is discriminated.

In Step S12, the processing on the pay of the progressive bonus is performed depending on the discrimination result of Step S10, as follows. Namely, if a symbol mark is disposed on the effective line, the character 123a, 123b, or 123c of the gauge 121a, 121b, or 121c corresponding to the symbol is advanced to the right by one

piece. If the character 123a, 123b, or 123c reaches the right end of the gauge 121a, 121b, or 121c, the progressive bonus as for the gauge 121a, 121b, or 121c is gained. Then, the number of the medals displayed on the counter 122a, 122b, or 122c is paid out as the progressive bonus. In this case, the number of the medals corresponding to the progressive bonus may be actually paid out, or the same number may be added to the credit number. Alternatively, a receipt describing the progressive bonus may be issued. When the progressive bonus is paid out, the winning character 123a, 123b, or 123c of the gauge 121a, 121b, or 121c is returned to the initial position.

When the processing about the progressive bonus is completed, the processing is advanced to Step S13 of Fig. 5 continuously. In Step S13, whether the bingo is completed or not is discriminated according to the discrimination result of Step S10. When it is established, the number of the medals assigned as the bingo is recorded in the RAM 16 as a dividend. The number of the divided medals is displayed on the monitor 4 (Step S14). When the bingo is not completed, Step S14 is omitted.

In the following Step S15, whether or not a hand containing two pairs or more is gained on any effective line is discriminated, according to the discrimination result of Step S10. When it is not gained, whether or not a hand

containing one pair is gained on any effective line is discriminated(Step S16). When the hand containing one pair is gained, whether or not the gauge 130 has already arrived at a goal is discriminated, with reference to the number of pieces of the gauge 130 (refer to Fig. 8) for the super double-up game recorded in the RAM 16 (Step S17). A goal lamp 130a indicating a goal and a plurality of piece lamps 130b···130b ranging below the goal lamp 130a are provided in the gauge 130. One lamp 130b represents one piece. Every time one pair is established, the number of the pieces recorded in the RAM 16 is increased by one after another. Simultaneously, the lamp 130b is lit on one by one from the bottom of the gauge 130 (Step S18). The gauge 130 arrives at the goal by lighting on the goal lamp 130a.

When it is judged that the hand containing two pairs is completed in Step S15, the processing is advanced to Step S19, where the odds set according to the successful hand and the number of the medals depending on the bets are recorded in the RAM 16 as the dividend. The amount of the dividend is displayed on the monitor 4. When the dividend for the bingo has been already recorded there, the sum of the same dividend and the dividend corresponding to the successful hand is recorded into the RAM 16 as the dividend.

In Step S20, it is confirmed whether a player wants to receive (collect) the dividend or proceed to the double-up

game. For example, a screen asking a player whether he or she wants to proceed to the double-up game is displayed on the monitor 4, and when the collect/pay-out button 6e is pushed, reception of the dividend is selected. When the deal/draw/double button 6a is pushed, it is judged that the double-up game is selected.

When the double-up game is selected, the processing is advanced to Step S21. Based on the number of the pieces of the gauge 130 recorded in the RAM 16, whether the super double-up game is permitted or not is discriminated. When the gauge 130 arrives at the goal, the super double-up game is permitted. When it does not arrive at the goal, the super double-up game is prohibited. When the super double-up game is prohibited, the double-up game is executed (Step S22). When the super double-up game is permitted, it is executed (Step S23). When one of these games is completed, the processing is advanced to Step S24, where whether or not the condition of releasing the probability fluctuation mode is satisfied is discriminated. For example, after moving to the probability fluctuation mode, when the successful hand containing two pairs or more is completed for a predetermined number of the times, it is judged that the condition of releasing the probability fluctuation mode has been satisfied. When it is judged positively in Step S24, the probability fluctuation mode is released in Step S25.

When it is judged negatively in Step S24, Step S25 is omitted.

In Step S26, whether or not the dividend is recorded in the RAM 16 is discriminated, and when there is the dividend, it is executed (Step S27). The dividend may be executed by adding the credit or paying the medals. When it is judged that a player wants to collect the dividend in Step S20, when it is judged that the gauge 130 has arrived at the goal in Step S17, and when it is judged that the gauge 130 is advanced by one piece in Step S18, the processing is advanced to Step S26.

Fig. 6 is a flow chart showing the processing procedure of the CPU 10 when the double-up game is performed. When the double-up game starts, the CPU 10 decides one card 102 for a dealer and three candidate cards 103 for a player's selection (Step S31). Simultaneously, the game screen 100B shown in Fig. 11 is displayed on the monitor 4. Further, video of dealing the cards face down is displayed. Then, whether or not a player selects one of the three cards 103 is judged(Step S32). For example, three hold buttons 6f are used for this selection of a card.

When a card is selected, the outcome of the game is decided by comparison between the number of the player's card 103 and the dealer's card 102. An image depending on the outcome is displayed on the monitor 4 (Step S33). Fig.

12 shows an image when a player wins. In Step S34, whether a player wins or not is confirmed. When a player wins, the dividend recorded in the RAM 16 is increased to the double (Step S35). Thereafter, whether or not a player wants to receive the dividend is discriminated (Step S36). When he or she does not do it, the processing is returned to Step S31, where the next game is started. When he or she wants to receive it, the double-up game is completed and the processing is advanced to Step S24 of Fig. 5. When it proves that a player loses the game, the dividend is confiscated, that is, changed to zero (Step S37). Thereafter, the double-up game is completed and the processing is advanced to Step S24 of Fig. 5.

Fig. 7 is a flow chart showing the procedure of processing of the CPU 10 when the super double-up game is performed. When the super double-up game is started, the number of the lottery times recorded in the RAM 16 is reset at zero as the initialization processing. The number of the pieces of the gauge 130 is reset at zero (Step S51). Continuously, one card 102 for a dealer and three candidate cards 103 for a player are decided (Step S52). The same screen as the game screen 100B shown in Fig. 11 is displayed on the monitor 4. Further, video of dealing the cards face down is displayed. Whether or not a player selects one of the three cards 103 is checked (Step S53).

When a card is selected, one is added to the number of the lottery times (Step S54). Thereafter, the outcome of the game is decided by comparison between the number of the player's selected card 103 and the dealer's card 102. An image depending on the outcome is displayed on the monitor 4 (Step S55). In Step S56, whether a player wins or not is confirmed. When a player loses the game, whether or not the number of the lottery times recorded in the RAM 16 reaches two is discriminated (Step S57). When it is judged that the number of the lottery times does not reach two, the processing is returned to Step S53. While, when the number of the lottery times is two, the dividend recorded in the RAM 16 is confiscated, that is, changed to zero (Step S58). Thereafter, the double-up game is completed and the processing is advanced to Step S24 of Fig. 5. Accordingly, in the super double-up game, a player can select two of the three cards 103, and the probability of win is increased more than the double-up game.

When the player's win is confirmed in Step S56, the dividend recorded in the RAM 16 is changed to the double (Step S60). Continuously, one is added to the number of win in the super double-up game recorded in the RAM 16 (Step S61), and whether or not the number of wins reaches the predetermined number is discriminated (Step S62). When it reaches the predetermined number, the probability

fluctuation mode is started (Step S63). Then, the number of wins recorded in the RAM 16 is reset at zero. Thereafter, the double-up game is completed and the processing is advanced to Step S24 of Fig. 5. When it is judged that the number of wins does not reach the predetermined number, the processing of Step S63 and S64 is omitted and the double-up game is completed.

The present invention is not restricted to the above-mentioned embodiment, but various modifications are possible. When a bingo is formed, the odds (delivery ratio of medals) for the successful hand on the effective line may be changed correspondingly to it. Various games other than a poker may be executed as the card game. The card is not restricted to a trump card, but a karuta or a traditional Japanese playing card, and the like may be used as far as it can form a successful hand by combination of some cards. The present invention may be adopted not only to an arcade game machine but also to a domestic video game machine, a game system using a network, and the like. According to the present invention, it is not restricted to the case of producing a dividend by completing a bingo, but there may be the case of decreasing the dividend when a specified combination is formed in a direction different from the effective line. Even when the number of bets is less than the max bet, a dividend may be controlled in consideration of the

combination in a direction different from the effective line. A dividend may be changed when a specified combination is formed repeatedly in a direction different from the line.

Although, in the above embodiment, the CPU ,as a game-controller, works as card deciding device, betting device, dividend controlling device, selecting device, dividend increase controlling device, judging device, and probability controlling device by combination with specified software, one of these device or all of them may be replaced with a logic circuit in combination of IC or LSI.

As set forth herein above, according to the present invention, with a plurality of cards placed in a matrix shape, a dividend is controlled, according to the combination of the cards on a line set in a specified direction of the matrix as well as according to the combination of the cards in a direction different from the line.

Accordingly, the present invention can enhance a player's fun of a game by adding surprise and accidental performance to a game without impairing easiness of a game.

CLAIMS

1. A game system comprising:

a display unit which can display a game screen;

an input unit for supplying a signal corresponding to a player's operation; and

a game controller for executing a predetermined card game using trump cards on a screen of the display unit with reference to the signal supplied from the input unit, wherein

the game controller includes:

a card deciding device for deciding a plurality of cards displayed on the game screen in a matrix shape,

a betting device for setting the number of lines depending on the value of a play, which a player sets by operating the input device, of a plurality of lines formed by the cards arranged in a predetermined direction on the game screen, as an effective line, and

a dividend controlling device for controlling a dividend for a player respectively according to a combination of the cards on the effective line and a combination of the cards in a direction different from the direction of the above line, wherein

the line is set in one direction of a vertical direction and a horizontal direction of the matrix,

the betting device increases the number of the effective lines according as the play value increases, and

the dividend controlling device produces the dividend when a successful hand is formed on the effective lines in the card game using the trump cards, and produces the dividend or changes the dividend having been produced when a maximum number of the lines included in the matrix are selected as the effective lines and a predetermined combination is formed by the cards on the maximum number of the effective lines, at least in the diagonal direction or in a direction crossing with the above line at right angle in the matrix.

2. (canceled)

3. (canceled)

4. (canceled)

5. (canceled)

6. (canceled)

7. (canceled)

8. The game system according to Claim 1, wherein

the dividend controlling device produces the dividend or changes the dividend having been produced when a predetermined number of the cards of the same mark or the

cards of the same number is placed at least in the diagonal direction or in a direction crossing with the above line at right angle in the matrix.

9. The game system according to Claim 1 or 8, further comprising:

a selecting device for selecting reception of a dividend or a chance of increasing a dividend when the dividend controlling device produces the dividend, according to a player's instruction given by the input unit; and

a dividend increase controlling device for increasing the dividend if an outcome of the game satisfies a predetermined condition, while performing a predetermined game, when the above chance is selected.

10. The game system according to Claim 9, further comprising:

a discriminating device for checking whether or not to advance the count associated with a chance of increasing the dividend based on the outcome of the game, every time a game using a plurality of the cards placed in the matrix shape is performed; and

a probability controlling device for increasing a probability of achieving the outcome satisfying the predetermined condition in a game performed by the dividend increase controlling device, when the dividend controlling

device produces the dividend as the above count reaches a predetermined value.

11. The game system according to Claim 10, wherein

the dividend increase controlling device makes a player select a predetermined number of the cards from the plurality of the cards, in the game, and executes a game for deciding victory or defeat according as whether the selected cards satisfy a predetermined condition or not, and the probability controlling device increases the probability by increasing the number of the cards selectable by the player.

12. A game controlling method for executing the following procedures by a computer provided in a game system:

a procedure of deciding a plurality of trump cards displayed on a game screen in a matrix shape,

a procedure of setting the number of lines depending on the value of a play a player sets, of a plurality of lines formed by the cards arranged in a predetermined direction on the game screen, as an effective line, and

a procedure of controlling a dividend for a player respectively according to a combination of the cards on the effective line and a combination of the cards in a direction different from the direction of the above line, wherein

the line is set in one direction of a vertical

direction and a horizontal direction of the matrix,

in the procedure of setting the effective line, the number of the effective lines is increased according as the play value increases, and

in the procedure of controlling the dividend, the dividend is produced when a successful hand is formed on the effective lines in a card game using the trump cards, and the dividend is produced or the dividend having been produced is changed when a maximum number of the lines included in the matrix are selected as the effective lines and a predetermined combination is formed by the cards on the maximum number of the effective lines, at least in the diagonal direction or in a direction crossing with the above line at right angle in the matrix.

13. A storing medium readable by a computer, with a program stored there, in which the program works the computer provided in a game system as

a card deciding device for deciding a plurality of cards displayed on a game screen in a matrix shape,

a betting device for setting the number of lines depending on the value of a play a player sets, of a plurality of lines formed by the cards arranged in a predetermined direction on the game screen, as an effective line, and

a dividend controlling device for controlling a dividend for a player respectively according to a combination of the cards on the effective line and a

combination of the cards in a direction different from the direction of the above line, wherein

the line is set in one direction of a vertical direction and a horizontal direction of the matrix,

the betting device increases the number of the effective lines according as the play value increases, and

the dividend controlling device produces the dividend when a successful hand is formed on the effective lines in a card game using trump cards, and produces the dividend or changes the dividend having been produced when a maximum number of the lines included in the matrix are selected as the effective lines and a predetermined combination is formed by the cards on the maximum number of the effective lines, at least in the diagonal direction or in a direction crossing with the above line at right angle in the matrix.

FIG. 1

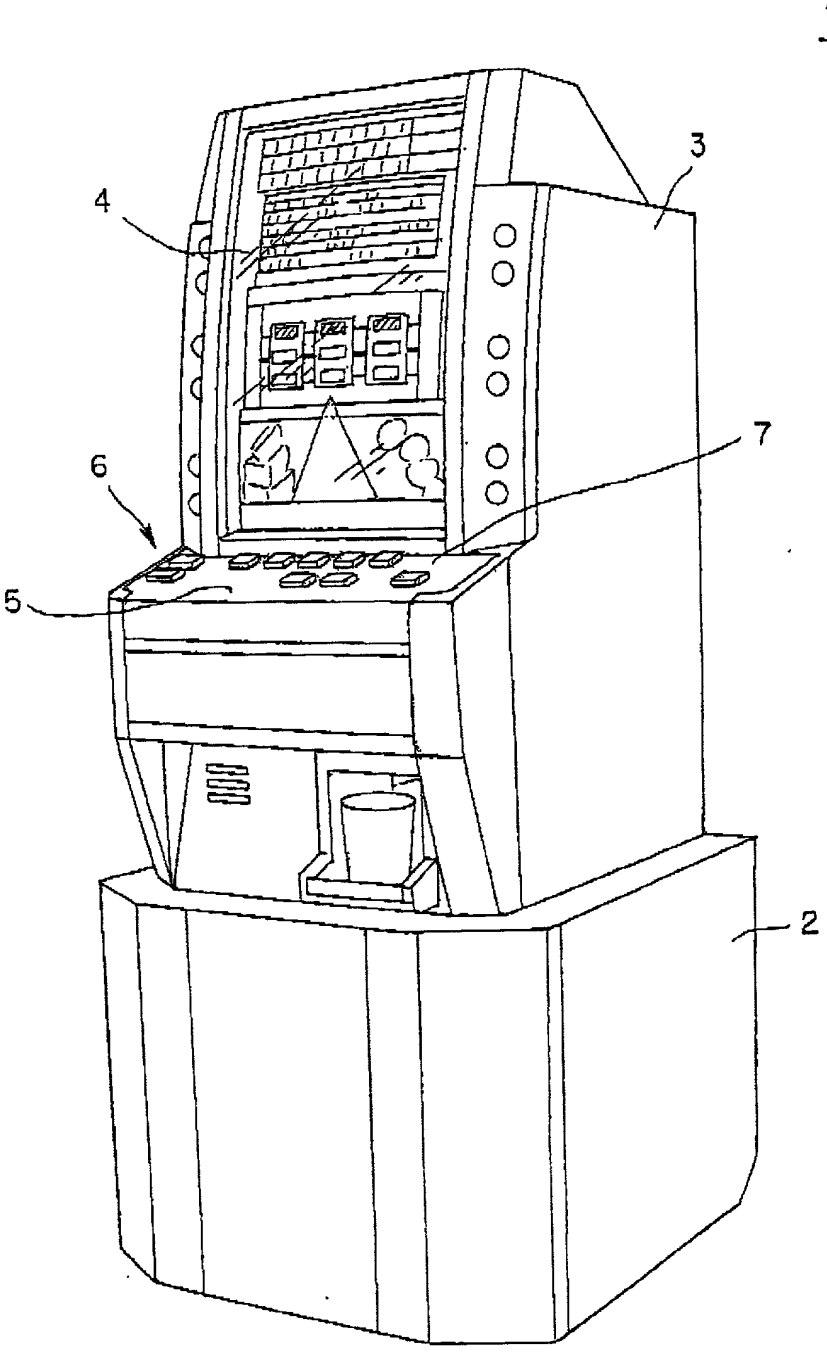


FIG. 2

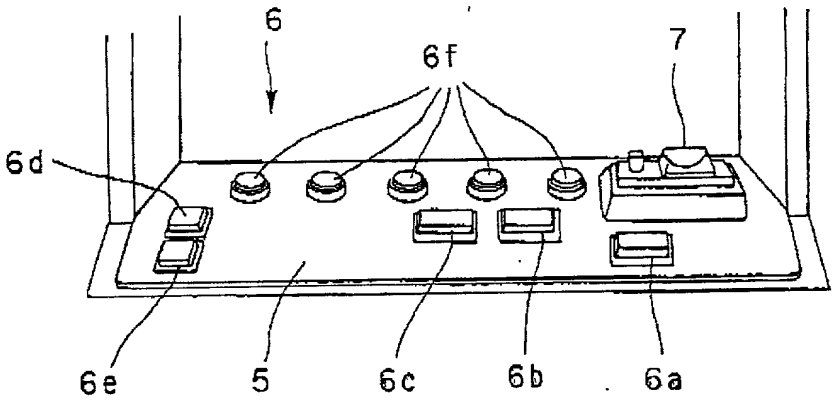


FIG.3

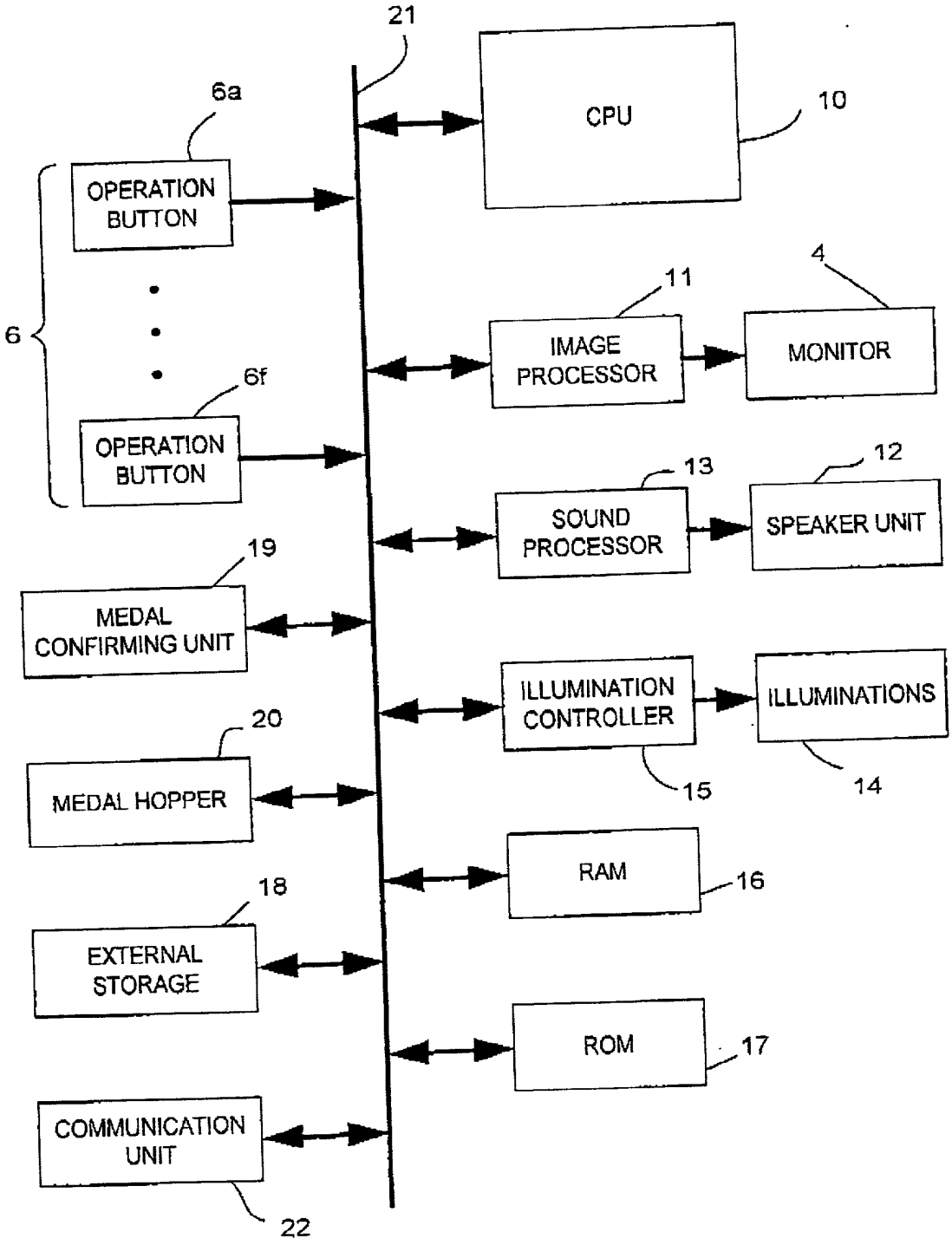

21
6a
OPERATION BUTTON
6
6f
OPERATION BUTTON
CPU
10
IMAGE PROCESSOR
11
MONITOR
4
SOUND PROCESSOR
13
SPEAKER UNIT
12
MEDAL CONFIRMING UNIT
19
ILLUMINATION CONTROLLER
ILLUMINATIONS
15
14
MEDAL HOPPER
20
RAM
16
EXTERNAL STORAGE
18
ROM
17
COMMUNICATION UNIT
22

FIG.4

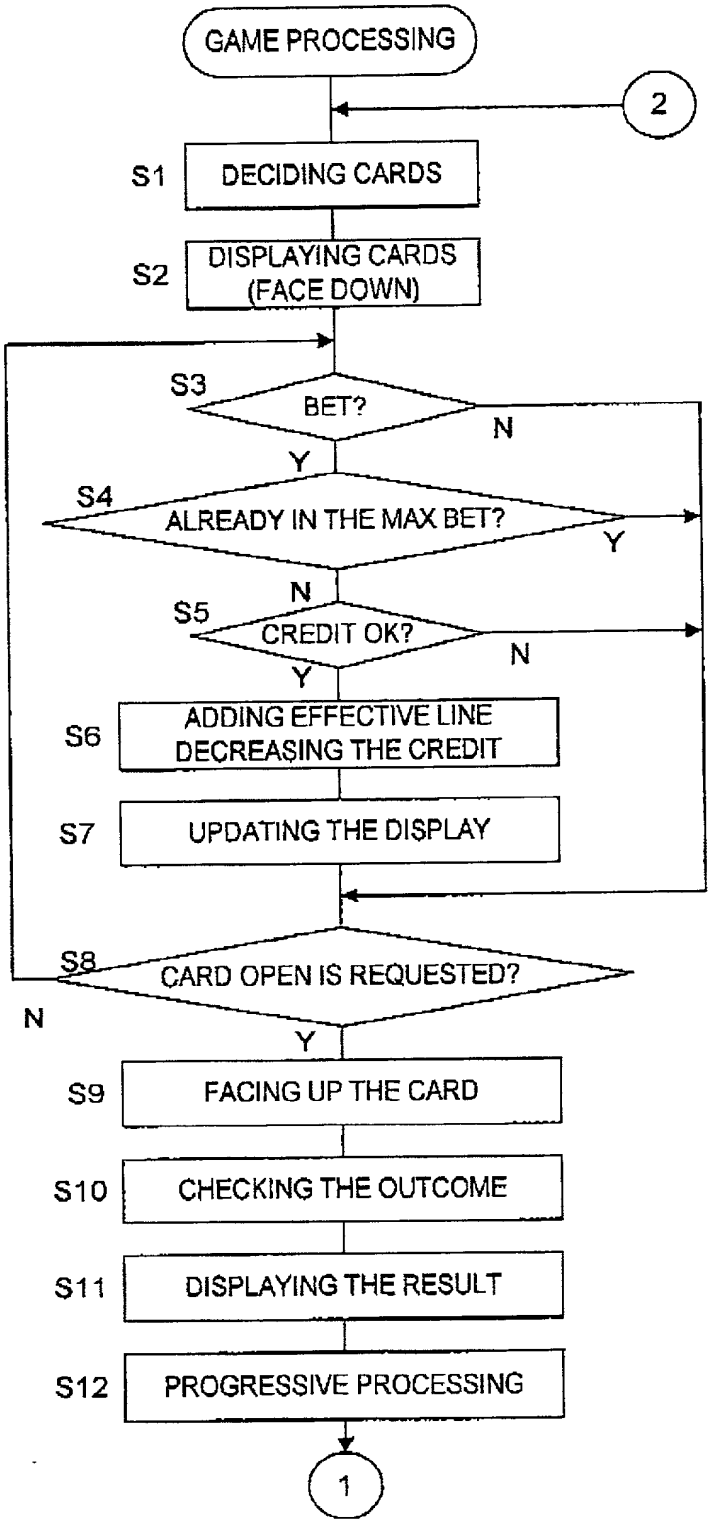

GAME PROCESSING
2
S1
DECIDING CARDS
S2
DISPLAYING CARDS (FACE DOWN)
S3
BET?
N
Y
S4
ALREADY IN THE MAX BET?
Y
N
S5
CREDIT OK?
N
Y
S6
ADDING EFFECTIVE LINE DECREASING THE CREDIT
S7
UPDATING THE DISPLAY
S8
CARD OPEN IS REQUESTED?
N
Y
S9
FACING UP THE CARD
S10
CHECKING THE OUTCOME
S11
DISPLAYING THE RESULT
S12
PROGRESSIVE PROCESSING
1

FIG.5

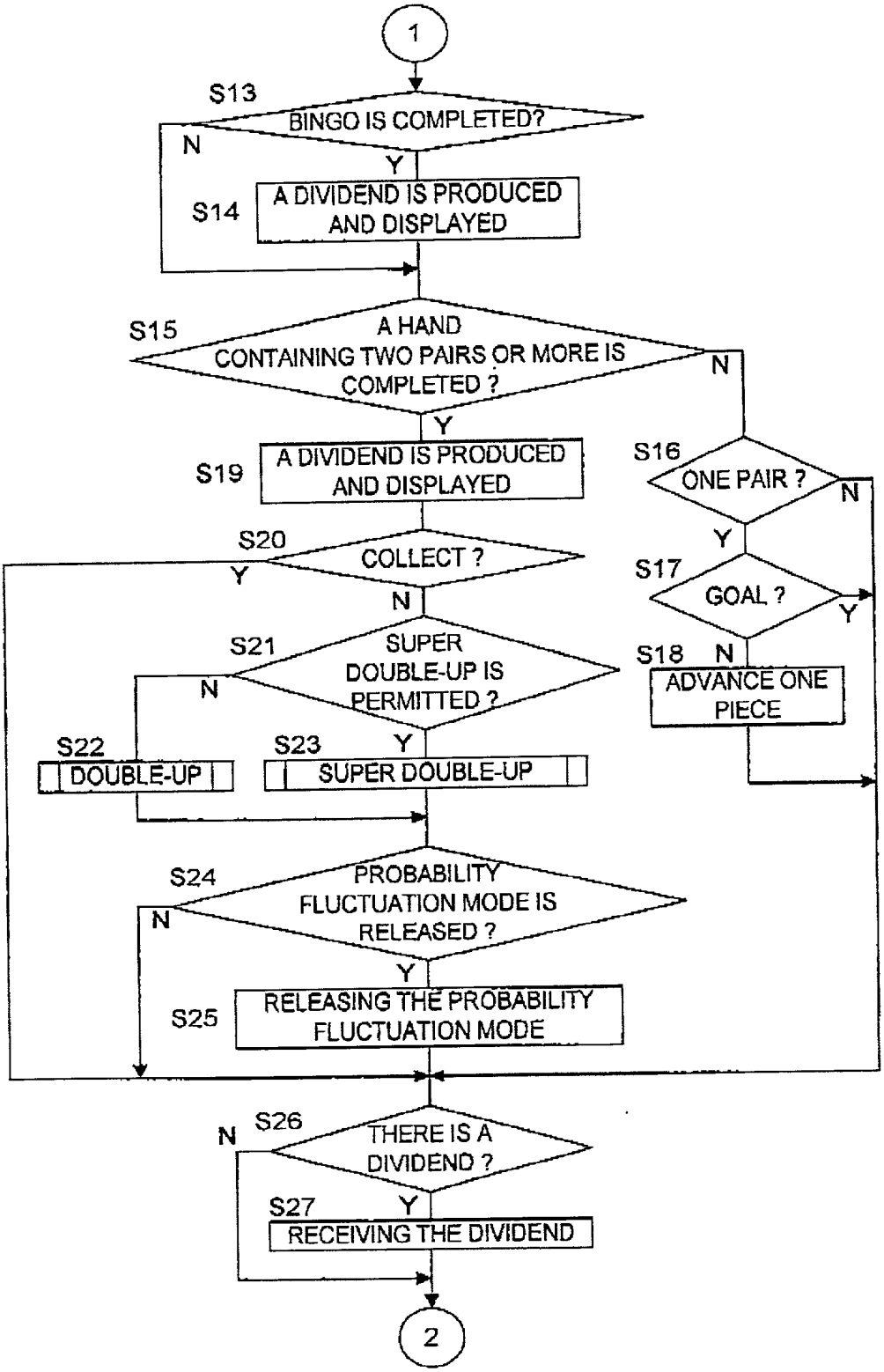

1
S13
BINGO IS COMPLETED?
N
Y
S14
A DIVIDEND IS PRODUCED AND DISPLAYED
S15
A HAND CONTAINING TWO PAIRS OR MORE IS COMPLETED ?
N
Y
S19
A DIVIDEND IS PRODUCED AND DISPLAYED
S16
ONE PAIR ?
N
Y
S17
GOAL ?
Y
S18
N
ADVANCE ONE PIECE
S20
COLLECT ?
Y
N
S21
SUPER DOUBLE-UP IS PERMITTED ?
N
Y
S22
DOUBLE-UP
S23
SUPER DOUBLE-UP
S24
PROBABILITY FLUCTUATION MODE IS RELEASED ?
N
Y
S25
RELEASING THE PROBABILITY FLUCTUATION MODE
N
S26
THERE IS A DIVIDEND ?
S27
Y
RECEIVING THE DIVIDEND
2

FIG.6

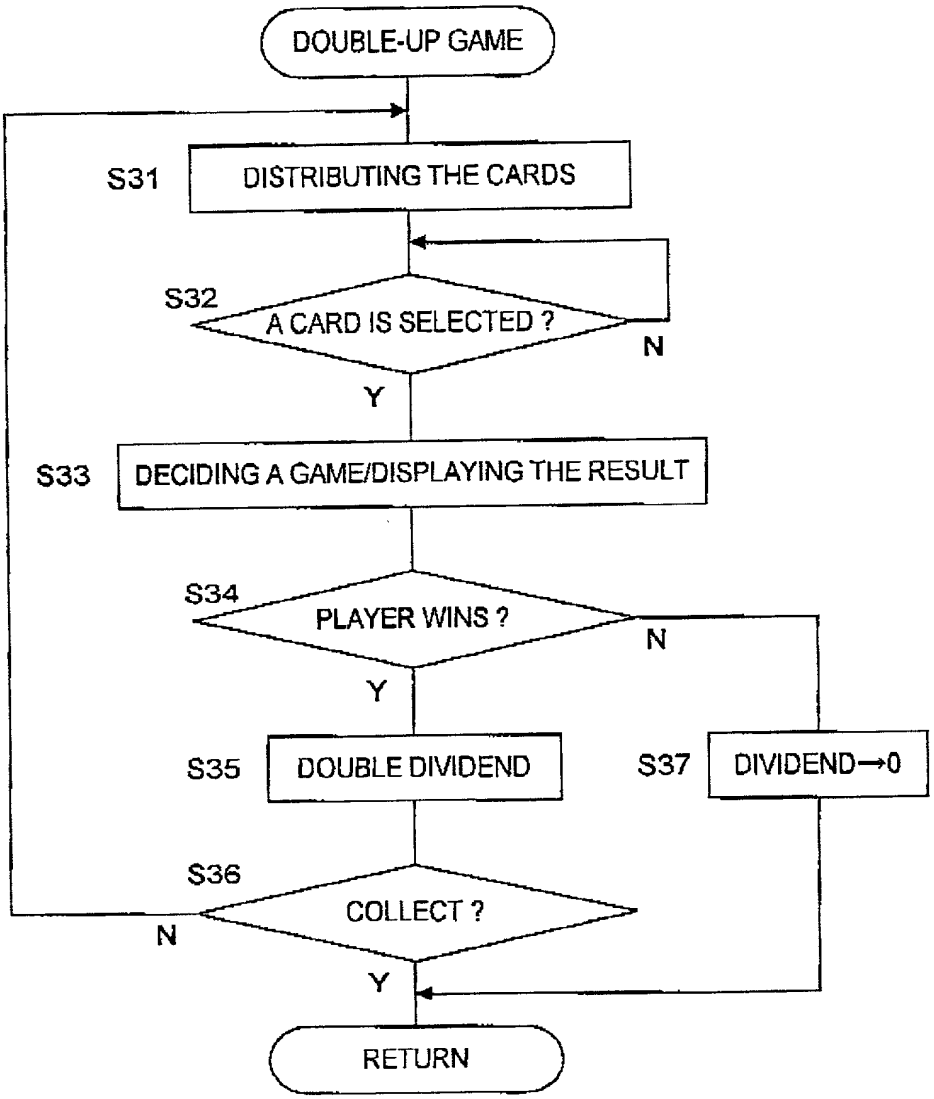

DOUBLE-UP GAME
S31
DISTRIBUTING THE CARDS
S32
A CARD IS SELECTED ?
N
Y
S33
DECIDING A GAME/DISPLAYING THE RESULT
S34
PLAYER WINS ?
N
Y
S35
DOUBLE DIVIDEND
S37
DIVIDEND→0
S36
COLLECT ?
N
Y
RETURN

FIG.7

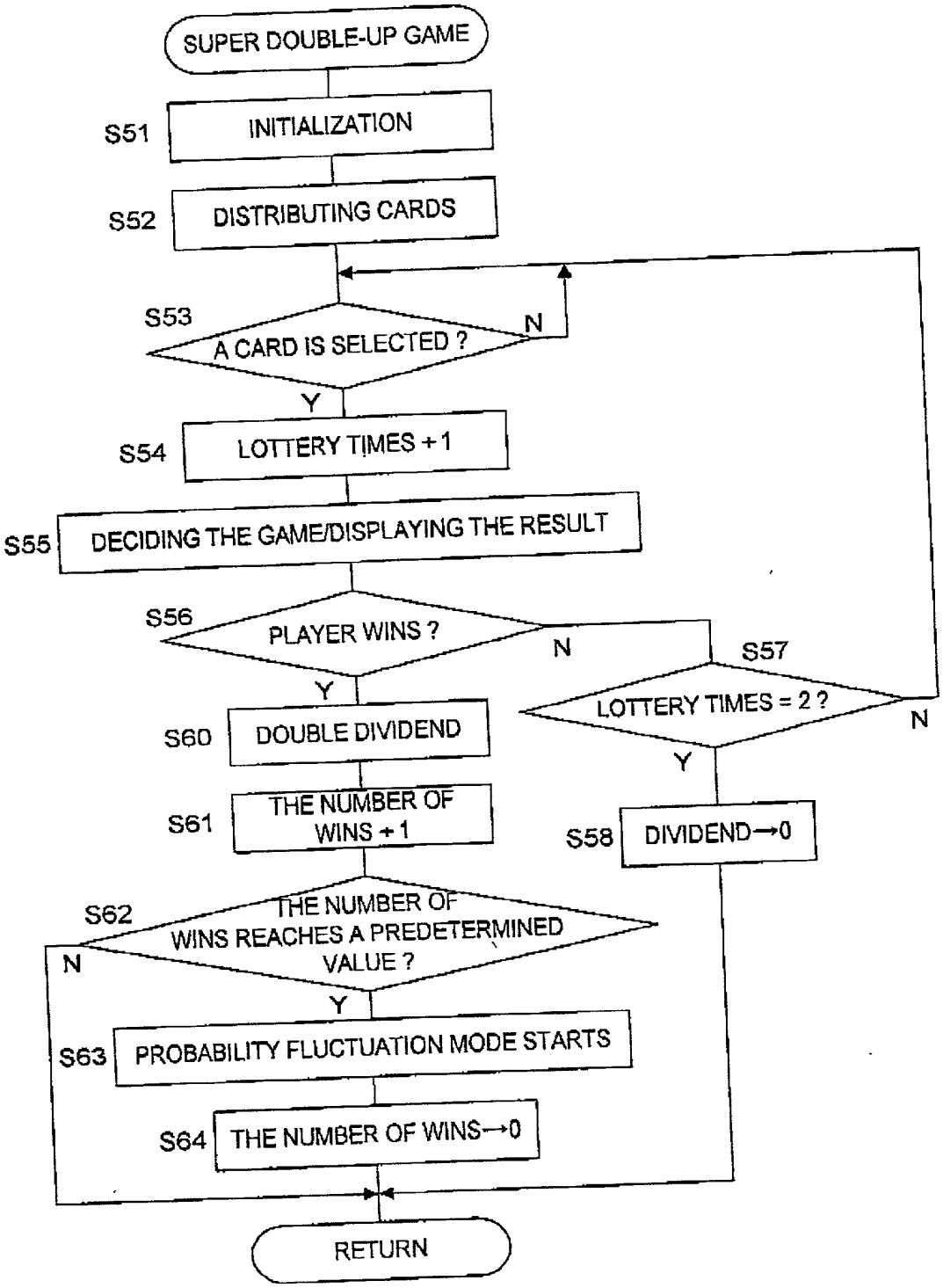

SUPER DOUBLE-UP GAME
S51
INITIALIZATION
S52
DISTRIBUTING CARDS
S53
A CARD IS SELECTED ?
N
Y
S54
LOTTERY TIMES + 1
S55
DECIDING THE GAME/DISPLAYING THE RESULT
S56
PLAYER WINS ?
N
Y
S57
LOTTERY TIMES = 2 ?
N
Y
S60
DOUBLE DIVIDEND
S61
THE NUMBER OF WINS + 1
S58
DIVIDEND→0
S62
THE NUMBER OF WINS REACHES A PREDETERMINED VALUE ?
N
Y
S63
PROBABILITY FLUCTUATION MODE STARTS
S64
THE NUMBER OF WINS→0
RETURN

FIG. 8

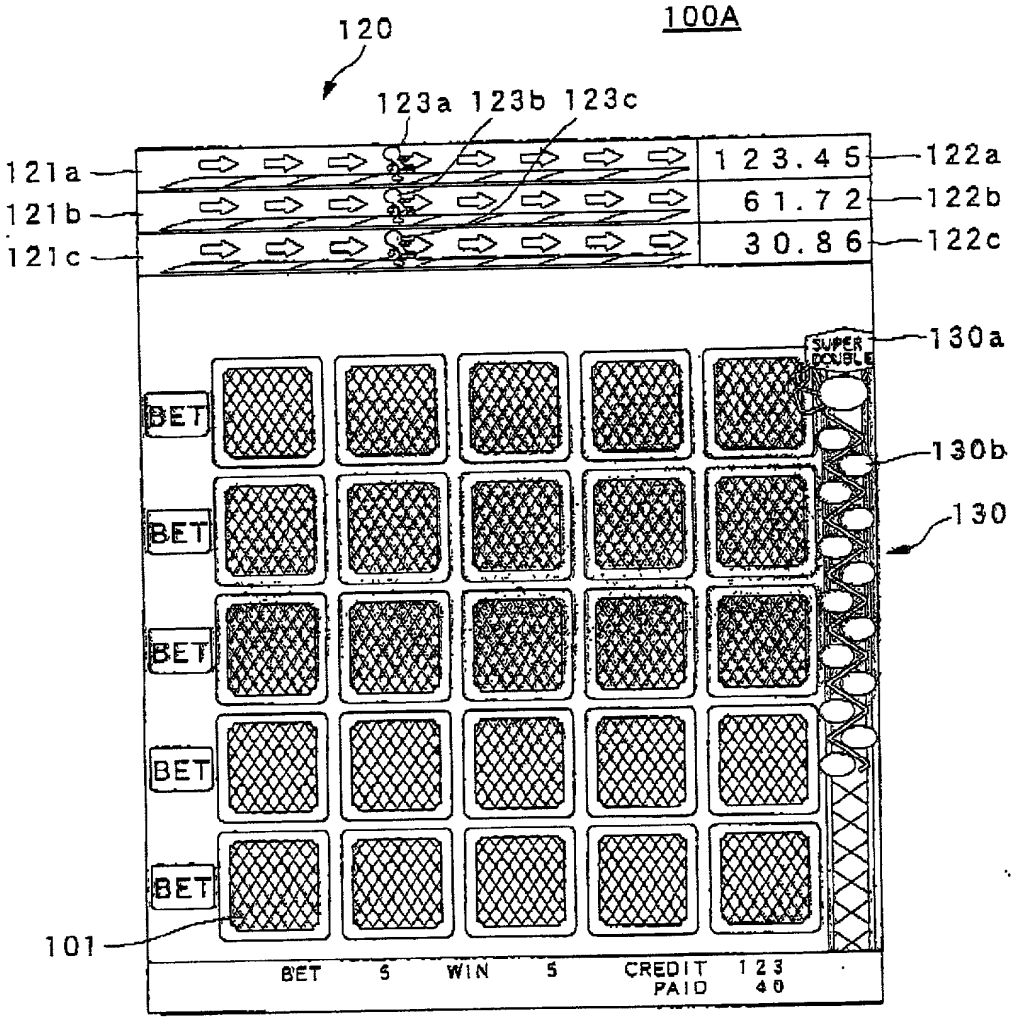

100A
120
123a 123b 123c
121a
121b
121c
123.45
61.72
30.86
122a
122b
122c
130a
130b
130
SUPER DOUBLE
BET
BET
BET
BET
BET
101
BET 5 WIN 5 CREDIT 123
PAID 40

FIG. 9

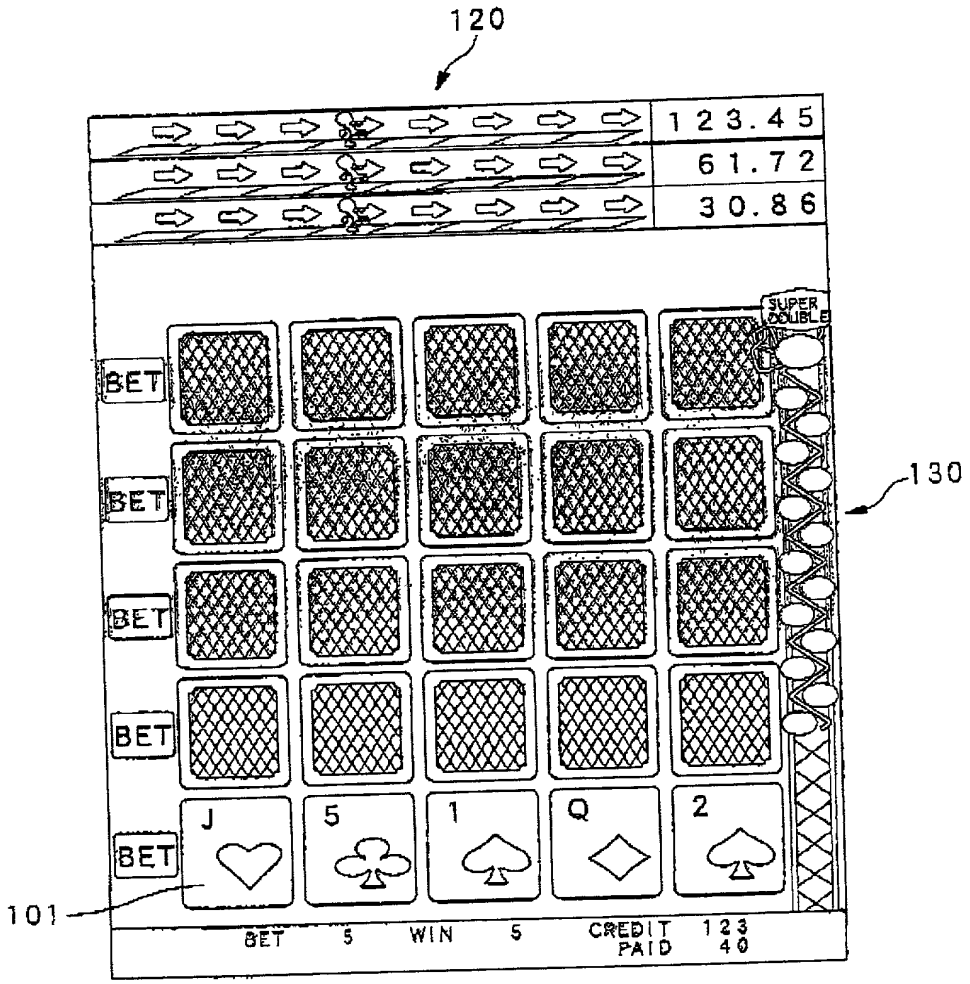

120
123.45
61.72
30.86
SUPER DOUBLE
BET
BET
BET
BET
BET
130
101
J
5
1
Q
2
BET 5 WIN 5 CREDIT 123
PAID 40

FIG. 10

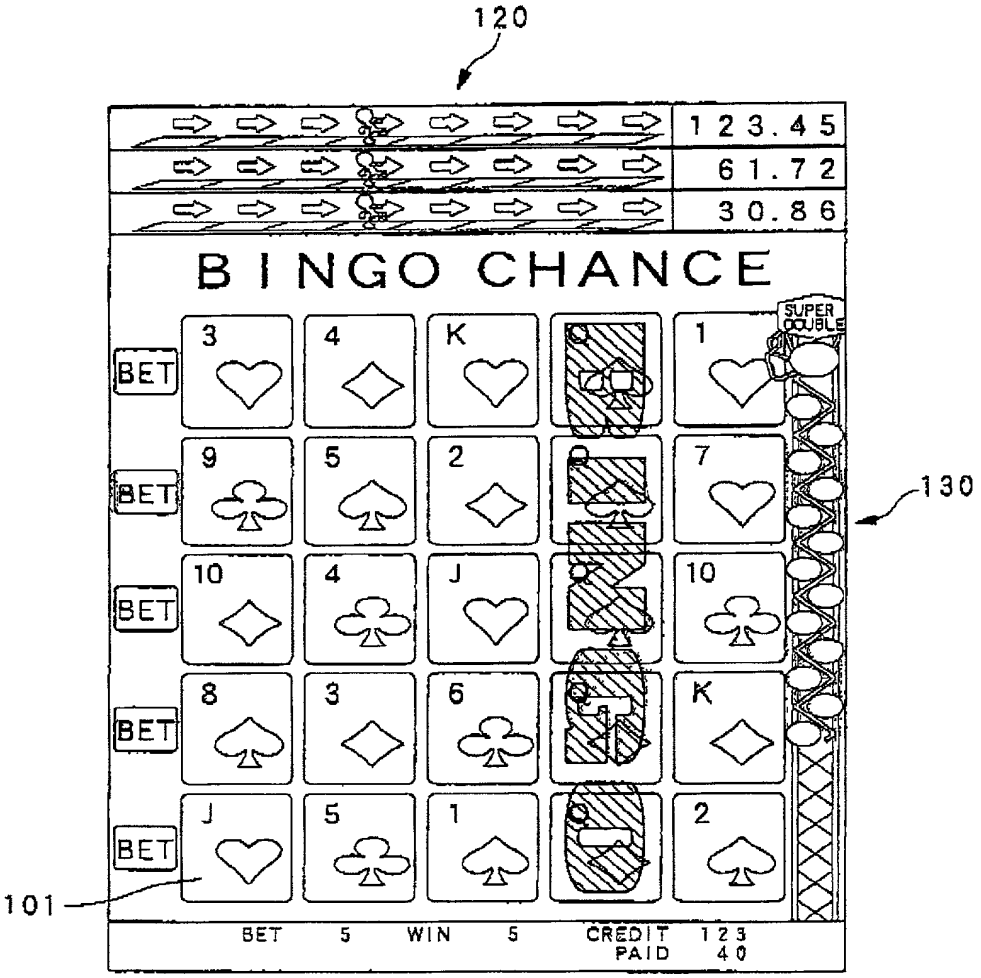
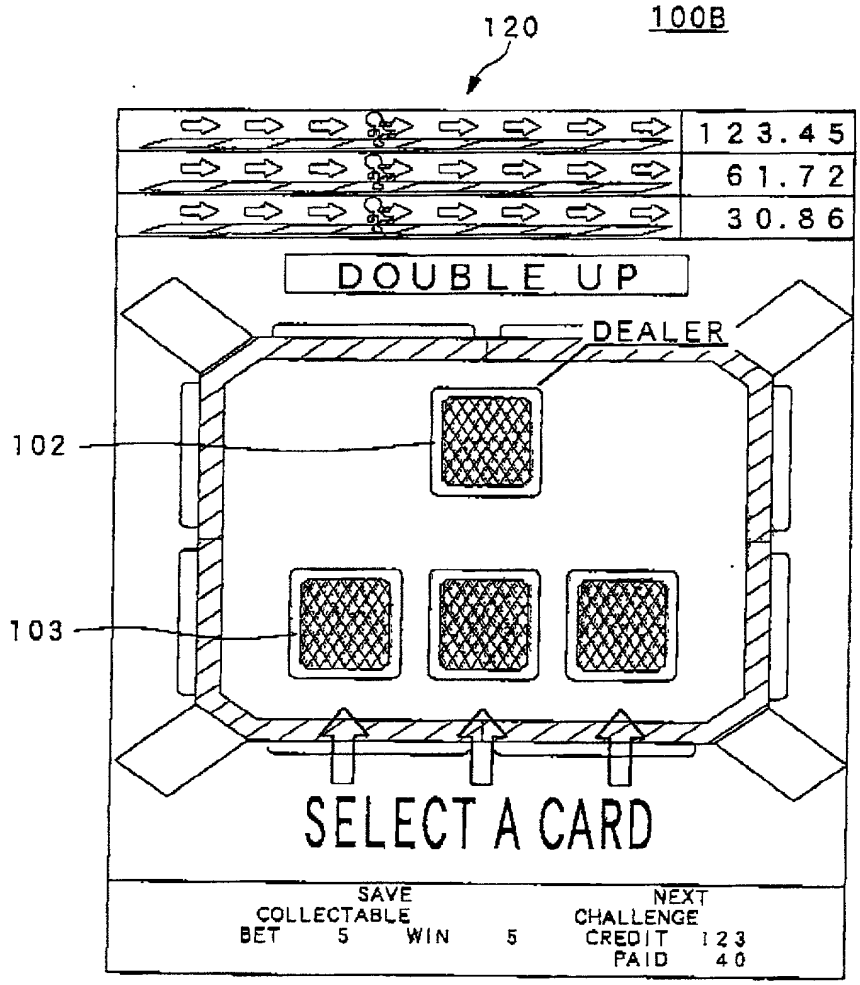
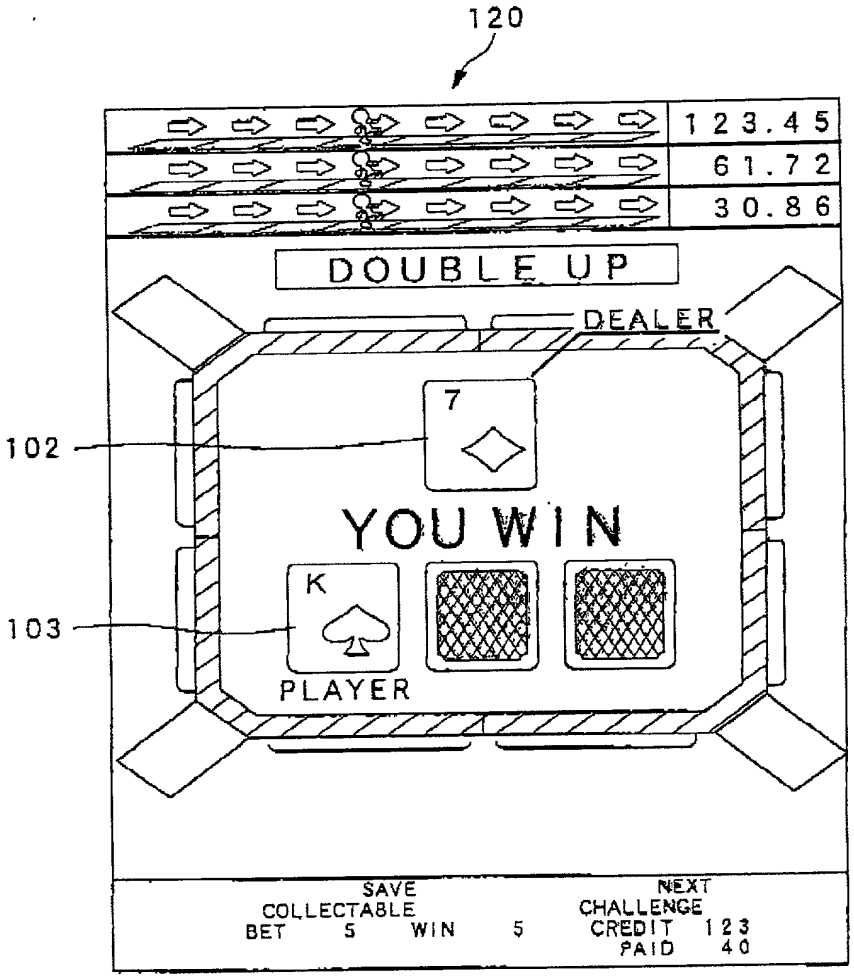

120
123.45
61.72
30.86
BINGO CHANCE
SUPER DOUBLE
BET
3 4 K Q 1
BET
9 5 2 Q 7
BET
10 4 J Q 10
BET
8 3 6 Q K
BET
J 5 1 Q 2
130
101
BET 5 WIN 5 CREDIT 123
PAID 40

FIG. 11


120
100B
123.45
61.72
30.86
DOUBLE UP
DEALER
102
103
SELECT A CARD
SAVE
COLLECTABLE
BET 5 WIN 5
NEXT
CHALLENGE
CREDIT 123
PAID 40

10/018408

FIG. 12



COMBINED DECLARATION FOR PATENT APPLICATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY (Includes Reference to PCT International Applications)	Attorney's Docket Number F-7249

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name,

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled:

GAME SYSTEM, CONTROL METHOD OF GAME, AND STORING MEDIUM READABLE BY COMPUTER

the specification of which (check only one item below):

[ ] is attached hereto.

[ ] was filed as United States application

Serial No. _____,

on _____,

and was amended

on _____ (if applicable).

[X] was filed as PCT international application

Number PCT/JP00/03854,

on June 14, 2000,

and was amended under PCT Article 19

on _____ (if applicable).

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above-identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to the patentability of this application in accordance with Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56(a).

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, §119 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate or of any PCT international application(s) designating at least one country other than the United States of America listed below and have also identified below any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate or any PCT international application(s) designating at least one country other than the United States of America filed by me on the same subject matter having a filing date before that of the application(s) of which priority is claimed:

PRIOR FOREIGN/PCT APPLICATION(S) AND ANY PRIORITY CLAIMS UNDER 35 U.S.C. 119:			
Country (If PCT indicate "PCT")	Application Number	Date of Filing (day, month, year)	Priority Claimed Under 35 USC 119
Japan	P11-167332	14/06/1999	[X] Yes [ ] No
			[ ] Yes [ ] No
			[ ] Yes [ ] No
			[ ] Yes [ ] No
			[ ] Yes [ ] No

COMBINED DECLARATION FOR PATENT APPLICATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY (Continued) (Includes Reference to PCT International Applications)	Attorney's Docket Number F-7249

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, §120 of any United States application(s) or PCT international application(s) designating the United States of America that is/are listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in that/those prior application(s) in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code, §112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose material information as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56(a) which occurred between the filing date of the prior application(s) and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

PRIOR U.S. APPLICATIONS OR PCT INTERNATIONAL APPLICATIONS DESIGNATING THE U.S. FOR BENEFIT UNDER 35 U.S.C. 120:

U.S. APPLICATIONS		STATUS (Check One)		
U.S. Application Number	U. S Filing Date	Patented	Pending	Abandoned

PCT APPLICATIONS DESIGNATING THE U.S.					
PCT Application No.	PCT Filing Date	U.S. Serial Numbers Assigned (if any)			
PCT/JP00/03854	June 14, 2000				

POWER OF ATTORNEY: As a named inventor, I hereby appoint the following attorney(s) and/or agent(s) to prosecute this application and transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith.

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I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code, and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issuing thereon.

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